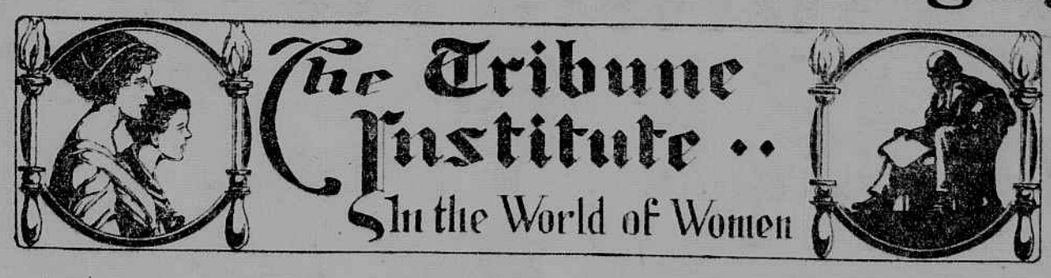
When the Business Man Engages a Cook



By ELENE FOSTER

ARE you the proprietress of this establishment? Well, I'm Mr. Danforth, husband of Mrs. Danforth, of Fulham Manor. You sent us a cook on Saturday, and I'm returning her this morning; you might put her back in stock and give me something different. Oh, nothing was radically wrong with her except she got her wires crossed. She thought she was invited to the country as a week-end guest, and acted the part. It wasn't really her fault; you see, Mrs. Danforth wasn't quite honest with her. She was so anxious to get her that she didn't come right out with the truth, and tell her that we lived in the country, and have four children, and it seems that the girl has a prejudice against the country and doesn't like children, so she felt that she was wronged from the start. Get me?

The "Real Country" Has No Lure Here

Now, I'm a business man, madam, and I believe in business methods in everything—clean, honest business methods. I don't believe in hiring help under false pretences. I say, tell 'em the truth and they can take it or leave it. It isn't as if there weren't enough women in the world who would be glad of a good home in a nice quiet family in the country, with a nice little bunch of money coming to them every Saturday night. War conditions, fiddlesticks! That's all newspaper talk. I'll bet you I can find a cook inside of five minutes that'll like the job and fall for it quick. Just show me your line of cooks, please. How about the fat one in the blue suit? She looks wholesome and intelligent; just watch her jump at the chance.

Good morning. I'm looking for a cook to go to the country. Yes, the real country; most beautiful place you ever set your eyes on. Only twenty-five miles from New York—good train service. You wouldn't consider it? Want a place in town? You never lived in the country? Well, then, here's your chance. Lovely air. Family consists of four children and my wife and myself. You call that a large family? Well, that's all a matter of opinion, but they're good children, eat anything that's set before them. You wouldn't? Oh, very well, I wouldn't want you to go if you feel that way about it; there are plenty of girls who would be glad to go.

The lady doesn't desire that type of position, madam. Just let me have a word with the little one in brown.

Good morning. I am looking for a cook to go to the—that is, a beautiful place in the suburbs, just outside of New York. You don't care for the country? Oh, I didn't say "country." I distinctly said "the suburbs," but this place is so near the city that it could hardly be called even the "suburbs." Small family, too. Better consider it; only my wife and myself and three or four children. You wouldn't think of it? Well, as a matter of fact, there may not be so many this winter. Oh, no, not that; they're all very healthy; always been used to a country life—that is, to *suburban* life—but we may send the oldest boy to school, so that would leave only three. You wouldn't! Well, I suppose we *are* old-fashioned to have so many children, but you see they were all born before the war and—you have made up your mind? Oh, very well. I see we can't talk business.

Could we have a window open, madam? It seems awfully close, don't you think? Let me see the one in the big hat.

Killing Off the Family to Please the Cook

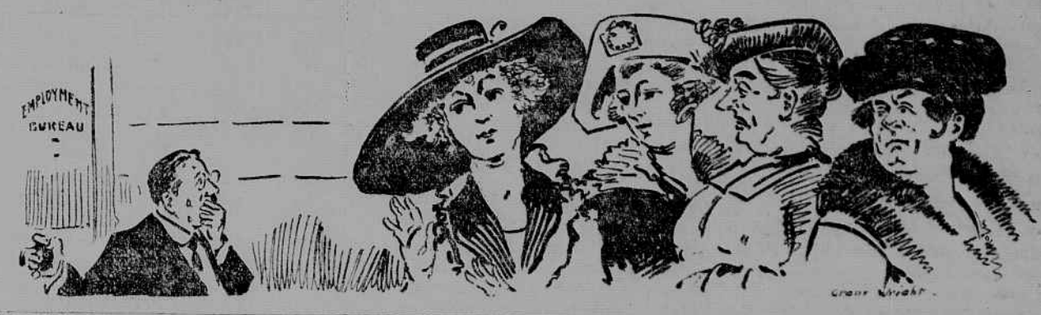
Good morning. I am looking for a cook to go to the—er—er—beautiful place, just outside the city limits. Oh, no, indeed, you couldn't call it the country, or even the suburbs; it's just over the boundary line, you know. Oh, the family amounts to nothing—just a few children and my wife and myself. Well, *four* to be exact, but we are likely to reduce the number very soon. We have about decided to send the oldest boy to military school, and that would leave only three, and the oldest girl is as good as engaged to a chap in France, and it looks as if the war would be over pretty soon, and then I suppose they'll want to get married, so that leaves only two, and they're little, and don't care what they eat. If you just stew up some oatmeal for them once in a while they'll be satisfied. Oh, you can come to town as often as you like; it's a nice little run in. You can't come for two weeks? Why not? Oh, never mind about your winter clothes; nobody cares what you wear if your cooking's all right. I guess Mrs. Danforth can fix you up with some of her old things; you're about her size. You see, in the country like that you don't really need—did I say country? Well, I suppose compared to Broadway or Forty-second Street it seems like the country because you see grass and trees, and—oh, very well, sorry!

Business Methods Beat an Undignified Retreat

Say, madam, I had that one all cinched, but my tongue slipped. If you'll just call the tall blond one in the corner, I'll land her in a jiffy. I know the ropes now. *Could* we have a little more air?

Good morning. I'm looking for a cook to go to—er—well, it's practically right here in the city; only not in the old part; you understand. Just out to the north a little, where the houses are clean and new. Think you'd like the job? Oh, it's a very small family, not worth talking about, really; just my wife and myself and—er—one or two children—that is—er—one or possibly more—maybe I'd better explain. You see, there are four at home now, but they won't be there long, for one is going right away to military school, one is going to be married very soon, another is likely to spend the winter—er—to spend the—er—winter with—er—his grandmother, so that only leaves one, and she's no trouble at all—only eats porridge. You don't like children? Want a job with a bachelor. Well, you'll never find that, for they've all gone to war. This is the nearest that you'll get to it, for Mrs. Danforth is away Red Crossing most of the time, and when she's in the house she's too tired to bother with the kitchen, and when all the children are away there'll only be me. Oh, you want to work in an apartment. Well, of course, you couldn't call this an apartment, exactly, but we might shut up part of it for the winter if it would make you feel any more contented. It wouldn't be the same? I can't say that I get your point, but if your mind is made up, of course, it's no use for me to try to coax you. I couldn't go so far as to promise to kill off my wife and children and turn my home into an apartment house in order to enjoy the advantages of your superior cooking, so I'm afraid we can't fix it up.

Say, madam, I'm through! I'm due at the office. If you should happen to hear of a nice, quiet family hotel, where a man and his wife and four children can board for the winter, just drop me a line.



War, Women and the Courtesy of the Road

By MAY BOSMAN

NO LONGER ago than a year—the summer of 1917—men motorists were saying that women drivers had the worst road manners conceivable—and they could prove it by concrete happenings almost every day!

One day in the summer of 1917 the writer was going to Jersey by one of the many congested ferries from downtown New York. There is no more trying experience than driving a car up to the ferry house and finding a place in the crowded, chugging line. It is nerve racking at best.

And it was not "at best" that day! Hundreds of pleasure cars, with a seemingly endless line of trucks, had been going across all day, all week, all summer. Nerves were frazzled; the traffic cop and the men in the ticket house and on the ferry platform were tired and cross.

A woman driver came honking up along the left flank of a long waiting line, instead of dropping into her place at the back, and took her stand at the head of a second line. There was no turning her back. Others, quick to follow bad example, fell in behind her, and a pernicious second waiting line was formed.

Was she satisfied? No indeed! That woman wanted a place to cut into the left line which might—might, mind you!—go first, and she didn't care how she managed it!

When the signal to go forward was given and the first car on the left started that girl started, too, holding out her right arm. No decent driver, man or woman, ignores the sign of the arm thrust from another car. Men and women behind her held up—and she cut in, third in line. The first was a truck; a truck crawled in behind her. And everybody was mad!

Mere decency might have restrained her then. But it did not. As she drove upon the ferry she coolly scorned the ferry attendant's direction and drove to the right instead of to the left, so that she need not have a smoking truck ahead of her. This made her second in the right-hand line and put two great trucks together on the left. Men drivers about her refrained from comment—all except the truck fellows. They yelled at her. Frowns greeted them. After all, she was a woman and you couldn't abuse her or smash in the side of her car! With her in her car were four women friends. They smiled complacently at her "cuteness."

When the ferry reached the Jersey side she capped her impudence by starting full speed ahead, honking like an ambulance, and passing the big truck and the small car ahead of her which had, of course, gone first.

"Hey, but you're some hog!" shouted the trucksters.

And then something delightful happened. On the start up the steep Jersey grade she changed gears, and her engine stalled. It—just—stalled. Four complacent women friends and one "smart" woman driver grew red with chagrin, while a quiet cop, with a funny little twinkle in his eye, gave the signal to other cars to pass her. The drivers passed with grim, satisfied faces, but one truck driver turned about and held his fingers to his nose in a world-old, horrid gesture of derision.

All last summer we wondered if that silly woman had learned a lesson from her discomfiture. The mere man with me said no, she wouldn't learn a lesson. "They've always presumed on their sex—and they always will!"

But the year has wrought changes among women drivers; changes that have gone deep, for obvious reasons. Last month at the same ferry the same car drove up with the same woman at the wheel. She was alone. Thirty cars were ahead of her; she took her place as the thirty-first, although from the load of bundles in her back seat she might have been more in a hurry than she was that day last year. The writer was number thirty in the line and the mere man was along. They all had to wait for the second ferry.

The episode of last summer probably had naught to do with her 1918 behavior. It goes deeper than that. She wore the uniform of a motor corps and was on government business. She drives a car now not to give pointless outings to complacent, admiring friends, but to perform a kind of much needed complementary military service. She has released a man for fighting and is helping her country win a terrible war. This training of women motorists for special government and semi-military service has made a definite change in their attitude toward road rights, and they do not presume on their sex. Such things are contagious. Other women follow suit.

A motor corps girl will help you change a tire if she has time; and the fact that you are a man and clumsy will not deter her if she thinks you need her help. She knows more about a car now than most men drivers.

But she is not cocky about it. "Service" is the keynote and watchword of her day.

From Fort Lee to Alpine on Foot

By MARY ALDEN HOPKINS

DURING the afternoon the portions of the Palisades close by the ferries are too crowded to attract hikers, but a few miles further on one finds giant rocks and blue sky and swashy waves and green foliage encountered by very few mortals. High-collared lads and high-heeled damsels very soon drop by the wayside. "The higher the fewer," is the rule of the path.

Scenery Without Submarines

For a short walk from Fort Lee (reached by the Fort Lee ferry from Manhattan) climb the hill by the path just north of the station. Or go up by trolley if you really can't manage it. From the summit you can reach the edge of the cliffs and walk along beside one of the most marvellous views in the whole world. Part of the way there is a truly walk, but some sections are private property. You mustn't be annoyed when you have to skirt fenced-off grounds by the rear. The front is sheer precipice. There is perhaps a mile and a half of walking and hundreds of delightful spots to sit down and say:

"Why do people go to Europe to rave over scenery?"

But avoid this section if you can't stand love making on every side. You read the Sunday paper if you wish to shut out the sight of it.

For the real Palisades walk from the ferry follow the motor road north about a mile. Then follow the shore path. No, you can't come down from the top of the cliffs here; at least, not in any condition for further hiking. This path runs along the river brink some twelve miles, to the state line.

A "Parkish" Place in the Making

The motor approach at Englewood is as impressive as all the mediæval castles of England piled one on top of the other! My chief joy in beholding it is that I haven't got to climb it. My path continues along the bank, through a parkish space that is going to be lovely some day. I have attended it through the cinder stage, the lose dirt stage, and have full faith that its present green twigs will soon be tropical verdure. This kind of growing up with the park which many of us have been doing gives us a sense of proprietorship.

A motor road is some day going to run along half way up the cliffs. At present only a mile is open to automobiles. All

On the Way

the rest of the way to Alpine it is a real country road almost lovelier than the path. A very satisfactory hike is to come over by the Fort Lee ferry toward the end of the morning with some sandwiches in one's pocket and follow the path toward Alpine up to Huyler's Beach. There is a chance to get onto the road above there and return by this unused motor road to the ferry. Or you can go 'way on to Alpine and return by the road. You see there are many permutations and combinations possible.

A charming cement bridge spans a green ravine, down which a busy little brook goes swishing. This bridge was a long time building. During the progress Italian workmen cut steps up the ravine on either side and tied ropes at the top. We drew ourselves up by these ropes. Near the top of the ravine we crossed on picturesquely wabbly planks. One Sunday I passed a real lady cleverly putting off the descent. Her blue foulard skirt was properly scant and her slender feet were in pale kid. She evidently had had about all she wanted of that path. As I passed I heard her distracting her escorting officer with intriguing conversation:

"It seems to me that love, if it really is love"——

Just then I stepped on a rolling stone and was very busy for the next few rapid minutes. When I came to a pause I was beyond eavesdropping distance.

When the Gypsy-Hearted Meet

The Italian workmen give the most foreign touches to the American landscape. A little shelter to shade a forge is twisted out of leafy branches. The men themselves as you pass them, cleanly shaved for the Sabbath Day, give quick response to a "Howdy."

It is always safe to give a friendly greeting to a foreigner, a Boy Scout or any one who by virtue of a knapsack or knickers is clearly a hiker. But just ordinary folks aren't expecting to be spoken to, and it is likely to be embarrassing all 'round. It would be pleasant, wouldn't it, if the gypsy-hearted could know each other as they passed? Yet I don't know how that could be, for it is hating tags and buttons and class distinctions that makes one happy afoot, while others ride past in their glorious odor of gasolene.

The Finnish Women's Co-operative Home

THOSE who have made an exhaustive study of the servant problem all agree on one point, namely, that we cannot hope for better conditions in our kitchens until we consider our servants as human beings instead of pieces of domestic machinery. "A better understanding between mistress and maid" is the burden of their song.

Just how this understanding is to be brought about is the mooted question, but the general consensus of opinion seems to place the greater responsibility on the mistress. She is advised to get acquainted with her domestic helpers, to take an interest in their amusements and outside interests. If she will do this, the wise ones assure her, she will be amazed at the intelligence, initiative and the keen sense of humor that are hidden behind the apparently stolid countenances of the members of her domestic staff. I must admit that I rather question the sense of humor, but I can certainly vouch for the intelligence and initiative, at least among women of one nation, Finland, for yesterday I saw a remarkable evidence of both these qualities at "The Finnish Women's Coöperative Home."

Initiative Not Lacking Here

Women from the northern countries—Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland are usually regarded as the most unemotional and stolid of all of our domestic servants. They apparently go about their work, day after day, in a mechanical manner, seemingly without ambition except to accomplish the work allotted to them; never taking the initiative, plodding along in the same old ruts, obedient, docile and trustworthy, but perfectly content to "leave things as they be."

If any one had told us that these women were the founders, shareholders and governing board of a prosperous club, which they carry on quite by themselves without advice, patronage or support from any one outside their own ranks, we could not have believed it. Nevertheless it is all quite true, and on the corner of Lenox Avenue and 122d Street you may see the proof of what I am telling you; visitors are very welcome.

It is a big brick house with brownstone steps. There is no sign to signify that it is anything but a private dwelling, like its neighbors. As a matter of fact, the sign was omitted purposely, for the club members have a holy horror of anything that would suggest an institution.

Coöperation Is Their Only "Angel"

The Finnish Women's Coöperative Home is really a working girls' club, which was founded ten years ago by a little group of Finnish women, all engaged in domestic service, who used to meet on Thursday evenings (their night "out") to exchange letters and newspapers from home and to thrash out their "problems" together. As the circle grew the idea of having a permanent place of meeting was broached, and each girl pledged herself to raise a certain small sum, which should be used as a sinking fund to float the enterprise. One hundred and fifty dollars was collected, and as this was much more than they had hoped to raise, they decided to plunge into a bigger scheme than a mere clubroom. They had a vision of a club where there would be living quarters for the girl out of employment as well as a meeting place for them all.

With this $150 they paid the first month's rent for a house on Lexington Avenue and made a deposit on a part of its furnishings, which were purchased on the instalment plan. A board of nine directors was chosen to run this clubhouse. It was hard sledding for a while, but after the furnishings were paid for the money which was received for board and rooms kept it going very comfortably.

When Lexington Avenue was torn up by the subway excavations the house became impracticable and the club moved to its present address, 241 Lenox Avenue. The plan for its support and government, however, remains the same. Every woman who wishes to avail herself of the privileges of the club pays $5 a year and becomes a shareholder. The governing board, consisting of nine of these shareholders, is elected semi-annually; that is, six new directors are elected, leaving three who have already served and are thus able to teach the new members.

A Place Where Comfort and Freedom Reign

An efficient Finnish housekeeper is in charge and a Finnish cook presides over the kitchen. The shareholders do nothing about the house, with the exception that each is expected to make her own bed.

The house is the stereotyped city house of the nineties, with a basement dining room and kitchen and a "front and back parlor" on the first floor. The front parlor is used for the employment bureau which is carried on in connection with the house and which adds greatly to its revenue. The "back parlor" is the general living room for the club members, "the lounge," perhaps we should call it, where the girls receive their men friends and where they can meet in the afternoon for a cup of coffee and the dainty Finnish wafers, which, according to the old home custom, are served at 3:30.

The rooms upstairs are used as sleeping quarters for the shareholders who are temporarily out of employment or are taking a little vacation. The larger ones are fitted up with a row of small white iron beds like a dormitory, while the smaller ones are rented as single rooms. A girl pays $7 for room and board if she occupies a bed in one of the big rooms, but if she has a room to herself she pays $8.50. These are war prices and they are 50 per cent more than what was originally asked for these accommodations.

The meals are excellent, and any shareholder has the privilege of inviting guests of either sex to luncheon or dinner by paying a nominal sum. There are no rules to be observed in the home except those which any girl of decent inclinations or education would naturally observe. The house is never closed and girls are admitted at any hour.

A Club-Home "On Its Own"

The home is practically self-supporting. Before the war the shareholders even reaped a little dividend now and again, but war conditions have cut down the revenue which came from the employment bureau and the high cost of living has affected the profits from the dining room, but still the deficit up to date has been very small and a bazaar or a ball held for the benefit of the home easily supplies the necessary funds.

There may be other coöperative homes like this which are run entirely by working girls, but I cannot recall one which is so absolutely "on its own" as this. There is usually some good angel in the way of patron or patroness who stands behind such an enterprise ready to back it with moral or financial support, but the Finnish Women's Coöperative Home stands absolutely on its own feet, a monument to the vision and perseverance and intelligence of the Finnish women who are engaged in domestic service.

ELENE FOSTER.

Tribune Institute Co-operative Clubs

BUTTER and eggs are vital foods, which is one reason for making them the basic products of a consumers' organization. They also vary greatly in price from season to season.

By neighborly co-operation, ordering fifteen dozen eggs at a time, with any amount of butter desired, you can get both of these everyday foods, of A-1 quality, at their wholesale cost, plus a 6 cent margin for the eggs and 3 cents for butter. These margins have been established to cover the jobbers' commission and the expense of delivery and handling, eliminating the retailer's profit and expensive overhead.

If you are interested telephone The Tribune Institute, Beekman 3000, for further details.